

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 233239 TOSEC 270440

FOLLOWING REPEAT OTTAWA 3778 ACTION SECSTATE INFO PARIS REYKJAVIK
MONTREAL 20 SEP 76.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 3778

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO SECRETARY'S PARTY FOR EAGLEBURGER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS

SUBJ: POST-MORTEM ON TWA HIJACKING

REF: A) MONTREAL 1361; B) STATE 227327; C) OTTAWA 3313 (NOTAL)

1. EMBASSY INTERNAL COMMAND STRUCTURE AND ITS LINES
OF COMMUNICATIONS WITH CANADIAN MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT AND CONGEN MONTREAL DURING
CANADIAN SEGMENT OF TWO HIJACKING FUNCTIONED SMOOTHLY
AND EFFECTIVELY. (EMBASSY POUCHING TO S/CCT DUTY OFFICER
LOG WHICH DOCUMENTS THIS POINT.)

2. EMBASSY DUTY OFFICER, WHO WAS FOCAL POINT OF
EMBASSY MONITORING, WAS NOTIFIED OF HIJACKING BY
DEPT DUTY OFFICER AT 9:05 PM ON SEPT 10. WITHIN
HALF HOUR, HE HAD ESTABLISHED TELEPHONE CONTACT WITH
THE CHARGE, THE DUTY OFFICER AT CONGEN MONTREAL
(MIRABEL AIRPORT IS WITHIN THEIR CONSULAR
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DISTRICT), AND THE DUTY OFFICER AT CANADIAN

MINISTRY EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. SHORTLY THERE-
AFTER, HE TALKED WITH AMB HECK IN DEPT. THESE
LINES OF COMMUNICATION WERE MAINTAINED THROUGH-
OUT THE INCIDENT AND PROVED TO BE ADEQUATE.

3. COMMUNICATIONS INVOLVING US AND CANADA ARE,
OF COURSE, VASTLY SIMPLIFIED BY FACT THAT WE ARE ON
SAME DIRECT DIAL NET WITH NO DEGRADATION OF TRANS-
MISSION SPEED AND QUALITY. EMBASSY DUTY OFFICER
AT FIRST SERVED AS CONTACT BETWEEN DEPT AND EXTAFF
BUT, AT 10:35 PM WHEN DIRECT PHONE LINK WAS
ESTABLISHED BETWEEN DEPT AND EXTAFF, RELAY ROLE WAS
UNNECESSARY AND DUTY OFFICER SERVED PRIMARILY AS
INFORMATION FOCAL POINT FOR CHARGE AND OTHER INVOLVED
EMBASSY OFFICERS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT DEPT ALSO
ESTABLISHED DIRECT LINK TO MIRABEL AIRPORT.

4. WE DID NOTE ONE ASPECT OF COMMUNICATIONS THAT
COULD BE IMPROVED. EMBASSY DUTY OFFICER SELECTED
THAT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN AT LEAST TWO PARALLEL LINKS
BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND OTTAWA AND THAT SAME SIGNALS
WERE NOT ALWAYS PASSED ON EACH. FROM CONVERSATIONS
WITH EMBASSY LEGAL ATTACHE, DUTY OFFICER GAINED
IMPRESSION THAT ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE (RCMP)
WAS IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH FBI IN WASHINGTON, AND
THAT INFORMATION PASSED DID NOT CORRESPOND
EXACTLY WITH INFORMATION RELAYED ON EXTAFF/DEPT
LINK. FOR EXAMPLE, FBI AT 1,21 AM SEPT 11
CONFIRMED 85 CIVILIANS ON BOARD AND AT 1:50 AM
EXTAFF CONFIRMED 83. ALSO FBI SOURCE CONFIRMED
BOMB EXPLOSION IN NEW YORK. EXTAFF DID NOT MENTION.
THESE MAY BE SMALL DIFFERENCES BUT SUCH DUPLICA-
TION LEADS TO UNNECESSARY CONFUSION. EMBASSY SUB-
SEQUENTLY LEARNED THAT CANADIAN MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
(MOT) AND THE FAA MAY HAVE MAINTAINED YET ANOTHER LINK.

6. WHEREAS DUAL OR TRIPLE OTTAWA/WASHINGTON
LINKAGE DID NOT IN THIS CASE BRING UNFORTUNATE
RESULTS, EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT DEPT CONSIDER
METHODS OF ASSURING THAT WASHINGTON AND HIJACKING
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SITE COMMUNICATE OVER SINGLE LINE, WITH TWO
CENTERS ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR LATERAL INTRA-
COUNTRY COMMUNICATIONS.

7. WITH RESPECT TO GOC POLICY ON TERRORISM,
EMBASSY HAS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT GOC DOES NOT
HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY NOR AN INTEGRATED PLAN
FOR DEALING WITH TERRORIST INCIDENTS SUCH AS THE

TWO HIJACKING. OUR IMPRESSION BUILT ON VARIETY OF EVIDENCE.

8. EMBASSY HAD RAISED TERRORISM WITH EXTAFF AUGUST 15 IN CONTEXT OF POSSIBLE UNGA CONSIDERATION. AS REPORTED REF C, EXTAFF WAS THEN "REVIEWING QUESTION OF TERRORISM". SUBSEQUENT INFORMAL CONTACTS BETWEEN EMBOFF AND EXTAFF DIRGEN TO BUREAU OF SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE LIAISON, J.G. HADWEN, INDICATE THAT EXTAFF REVIEW HAS NOT BEEN COMPLETED.

9. EVIDENCE OF APPARENT GOC FAILURE TO FORGE DECISIVE AND REASONED POLICY IN THIS AREA APPEARED IN SEPT 15 PRESS REPORTS. ACCORDING TO PRESS STORIES, SOLICITOR-GENERAL WARREN ALLMAND SAID THAT HIJACKED TWO PLANE WAS PERMITTED TO LEAVE MIRABEL AIRPORT BECAUSE HIJACKERS MADE NO DEMANDS WHICH CONTRAVENED CANADIAN LAW. HE ADDED THAT FUEL HAD BEEN REQUESTED BY PLANE'S CAPTAIN AND NOT BE TERRORISTS. HAD LATTER MADE THE DEMANDS "WE WOULD HAVE REFUSED THEM" ACCORDING TO ALLMAND, SINCE CANADA'S POLICY IS NOT TO SURRENDER TO DEMANDS THAT ARE CONTRARY TO CANADIAN LAW. COMMENT: THIS DISTINCTION STRIKES EMBASSY AS OVERLY LEGALISTIC AND LACKING CONSIDERATION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF THE PROMLEMS. END COMMENT.

10. DURING THE TWA HIJACKING INCIDENT, THERE WERE SIGNS OF CONFUSION AND LACK OF COORDINATION WITHIN GOC REFLECTING ABSENCE OF COHERENT CANADIAN POLICY. WHEN EMBASSY DUTY OFFICER CALLED TO THANK ACTING HEAD OF USA DIVISIONS, EXTAFF, FOR COOPERATION DURING THE CONFIDENTIAL

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INCIDENT, THE LATTER SAID, WITH OBVIOUS DISGUST, "THANKS FOR WHAT? WE DIDN'T DO MUCH."

11. COMMENT: IF OUR CONCLUSION THAT GOC LACKS COMPREHENSIVE TERRORISM POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES IS CORRECT, SATISFACTORY HANDLING HERE OF TWO INCIDENT WAS DUE MORE TO LUCK THAN PRESCIENCE AND RESULTS IN ANOTHER INCIDENT COULD BE DIFFERENT. SINCE ANY FUTURE HIJACKING IN US COULD EASILY INVOLVE CANADA ONCE AGAIN, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER SENDING AN S/CCT REPRESENTATIVE TO DISCUSS MATTER WITH DIRGEN HADWEN. ENDERS UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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